
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 August 2022

by C Hall BSc MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5th September 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/J2285/D/22/3295307

8 Merriall Close, Castle Hill, Ebbsfleet Valley DA10 1BH

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Daniel Moore against the decision of Ebbsfleet Development Corporation.
 - The application Ref EDC/21/0197, dated 3 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 19 January 2022.
 - The proposed development is for the installation of dormer roof extension to rear of dwelling and alteration to the roof form.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The Development Plan comprises the Dartford Development Policies Plan July 2017 (DPP) and the Dartford Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy September 2011. The emerging Dartford Publication Local Plan 2021 has been submitted for examination by the Inspectorate. The plan remains at an early stage of preparation and as such accrues only limited weight in my consideration of the merits of this appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character of the dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site relates to a detached two-storey house situated on the edge of a modern residential estate. The proposal is for a roof extension incorporating a rear dormer window.
 5. At my site visit my attention was drawn to other examples of dormer windows within the vicinity of the appeal property. I noted that these are relatively small compared to their respective host dwellings, and therefore exhibit an acceptable degree of subservience.
 6. Conversely, the dormer window the subject of this appeal would occupy a significant proportion of the rear roofslope of the dwelling. It would be constructed in close proximity to the ridge line, which would increase its prominence, and appear boxy and bulky, dominating the upper level of the main house and competing with its relatively diminutive scale. It would be
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clearly visible from the habitable rooms and private amenity spaces of surrounding dwellings, having a jarring effect by virtue of its extent across the roof of the building.

7. I am satisfied that in principle a flat roof design could be acceptable as is the case for the smaller, individual dormers at 5 Mercer Close, which are also visible from public vantage points. However, the scheme before me would appear discordant due to its size as reasoned above.
8. I acknowledge the appellant's attempt to reduce the mass of the dormer with the set back in the middle. Nevertheless, due to the size and scale of the element this would appear as a token gesture when viewed from the nearby area of public open space.
9. I note that Policy DP7 of the DPP states that hip to gable extensions are generally discouraged in the pursuit of good design in all developments, This notwithstanding, the surrounding estate contains roof shapes of various size, design and detailing, and in this context I consider that the loss of the half-hip in itself would not be sufficiently detrimental as to warrant a refusal of planning permission.
10. I am also cognisant that the scheme has been the subject of negotiation with the Council, that the fenestration would align with the windows below at ground and first floor host dwelling, and the scheme would provide enlarged accommodation for the appellant and his family. However, these issues do not overcome the harm I have identified above.
11. I conclude that the scheme would be injurious to the character and appearance of the dwelling and the surrounding area. It would be contrary to Policies DP2 and DP7 of the DPP, which seek to secure new development of acceptable scale and appearance. It would also be inconsistent with the National Planning Policy Framework which states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

Conclusion

12. Given my reasoning and all the issues raised, the appeal is dismissed.

C Hall

INSPECTOR